

Aethon

User Guide | Parish Audio

Granular Transformation Engine for rhythmic textures, ambient smearing, width, and evolving time-based sound design.



Product page: <https://parishaudio.com/products/aethon>

Aethon captures incoming audio into a rolling buffer, replays it as granular layers, then shapes the result with filtering, motion, diffusion, space, saturation, stereo width, wet/dry mix, and output control. The Transform macro is the master depth control that scales how strongly many of these processes are heard.

1. Quick Start

1. Insert Aethon on the track or bus you want to transform.
2. Raise Transform to bring the granular engine and finishing effects into the sound. At very low Transform settings, Aethon remains close to the original signal.
3. Start with Grain Size, Grain Rate, Density, Position, Jitter, Spread, and Smooth to define the basic motion and texture of the grain field.
4. Use Capture to decide how much recent audio history is available to the grains. Longer capture times allow grains to reach farther back into the past.
5. Use HPF, LPF, Motion, Diffuse, Space, Size, and Color to shape the transformed signal after granulation.
6. Set Mix for the balance between dry and processed sound, then use Output for final level matching.

2. Signal Flow at a Glance

- Aethon continuously records the input into an internal rolling history buffer.
- The grain engine reads from that history buffer and spawns grains according to Grain Rate or the selected Rate Sync division.

- Each grain has a duration determined by Grain Size and uses smooth fade-in/fade-out windows determined partly by Smooth.
- Position selects how far back into the captured history grains tend to read, while Jitter adds random variation around that location.
- Density determines how many grain layers are spawned at each interval.
- Reverse controls the probability that a grain will read backward instead of forward.
- Spread and Drift influence stereo placement and motion of the grain field.
- The granular result then passes through HPF and LPE, Motion modulation, Diffuse smearing, Color saturation, and Space reverb.
- Width is applied as a final stereo-width stage on the processed path.
- Mix blends the dry source with the processed signal, and Output sets the final plugin level.

3. Main Performance Controls

Power On / Off

Engages or bypasses Aethon with a smoothed transition. When bypassed, the untouched dry input is heard.

***Practical note:** Power bypass is different from setting Mix to 0%. Power returns the original unprocessed signal without Output gain.*

Transform 0 to 100%

The main macro that scales the depth of the granular and finishing processes. At low values, the effect stays close to the source. At higher values, granular behavior, filtering, spread, and other transformations become more pronounced.

***Practical note:** Transform does not simply act as a wet level. It also influences how strongly Position, Jitter, Drift, Spread, filters, and other behaviors affect the signal.*

Freeze On / Off

Stops updating the capture buffer so Aethon continues processing the currently stored audio instead of recording new incoming material.

***Practical note:** Freeze is useful for turning a passing moment into a stable texture you can continue shaping.*

Clear Momentary action

Clears the capture/history buffer and resets the stored source material.

***Practical note:** If the effect seems to be reacting to older material you no longer want, Clear gives you a fresh buffer.*

Rate Sync Free, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, 1/32

Switches Grain Rate between free-running Hertz mode and tempo-synced intervals based on the host BPM.

***Practical note:** When set to Free, Grain Rate is measured in Hz. When a synced division is selected, the note value determines the grain interval and the Grain Rate knob no longer sets the interval directly.*

Capture 1.0 to 8.0 s

Sets how much recent history the grain engine is allowed to read from. Longer settings allow grains to reach farther into the past; shorter settings keep the effect focused on more recent material.

4. Grain Engine Controls

Grain Size 8 to 800 ms

Controls the duration of each grain. Short values create tighter, more particulate textures; longer values sound smoother, more smeared, or more ambient.

Grain Rate 0.5 to 60 Hz

Sets how often grains are spawned when Rate Sync is set to Free. Lower values create sparse events; higher values create denser, more continuous clouds.

Density 1 to 6

Sets how many grain layers are spawned at each interval. Higher values thicken the cloud and increase overlap.

Position 0 to 100%

Determines where Aethon tends to read within the captured history. Lower values favor more recent material; higher values look farther back in time.

Practical note: Position becomes more pronounced as Transform is increased.

Jitter 0 to 100%

Adds random variation to grain read position, making the texture less static and more scattered.

Practical note: Low Jitter keeps grains more orderly; high Jitter creates more unpredictable grain placement.

Drift 0 to 100%

Adds evolving motion that influences timing, grain size variation, and stereo behavior over time.

Practical note: Drift is especially effective for turning a static texture into something that slowly breathes and shifts.

Reverse 0 to 100%

Controls the probability that a grain will play backward. Higher values produce more reverse fragments and ghosted, reversed textures.

Spread 0 to 100%

Controls random stereo placement of the grains. Higher values push grains farther apart across the stereo field.

Width 0 to 200%

Sets the final stereo width of the processed path. 100% is neutral, lower values narrow the processed image, and values above 100% exaggerate the side component.

Practical note: Width acts only on the processed signal; the dry path is not width-processed before the Mix stage.

Feedback 0 to 85%

Feeds a controlled amount of the active granular output back into the capture buffer, allowing the texture to build and evolve.

Practical note: Feedback is softly bounded to avoid runaway instability, but high settings can still become intense and self-reinforcing.

Smooth 0 to 100%

Controls the grain fade length. Higher values create longer fades and smoother grain edges; lower values make the grains feel more immediate and articulated.

Practical note: Smooth is a useful antidote when you want a less choppy or less staccato granular character.

5. Finishing FX Controls

HPF 20 Hz to 5 kHz

High-passes the processed signal. Use it to thin out low-frequency build-up or keep the transformed texture from masking the dry source.

LPF 400 Hz to 20 kHz

Low-passes the processed signal. Lower values darken the cloud and can make the effect sit farther back in the mix.

Motion 0 to 100%

Adds a subtle stereo delay modulation stage that creates animated movement in the processed sound.

Diffuse 0 to 100%

Adds multi-stage diffusion that smears grain detail into a softer, more cloud-like texture.

***Practical note:** Diffuse is especially good for moving from clearly audible grains toward a more atmospheric wash.*

Space 0 to 100%

Controls how much reverb is blended into the processed path.

Size 0 to 100%

Sets the apparent size of the reverb space used by the Space control.

Color 0 to 100%

Adds saturation and harmonic color to the processed signal using a smooth nonlinear stage.

***Practical note:** Use Color to make the effect brighter, denser, or more forward without changing the dry path.*

Mix 0 to 100%

Blends the dry input with the fully processed path. 100% is fully wet; lower values retain more of the original signal.

Output -18 to +12 dB

Sets the final output level after processing and wet/dry blend.

6. Rate Sync and Host Tempo

When Rate Sync is set to Free, grains are triggered in Hertz according to the Grain Rate control. When a note value is selected, Aethon syncs the grain interval to the host tempo using the following divisions: 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, and 1/32. The current BPM is also displayed in the interface so you can see the timing context Aethon is using.

Rate Sync mode	Behavior
Free	Grain Rate knob sets interval in Hz.
1/4	One grain interval per quarter-note.
1/8	One grain interval per eighth-note.
1/16	One grain interval per sixteenth-note.
1/32	One grain interval per thirty-second-note.

7. Factory Presets

Preset	Starting character
Gentle Drift	Mild enhancement with gentle movement and minimal obvious transformation.
Soft Drift	A subtle, slightly more animated version of the gentle setting.
Subtle Bloom	Soft bloom and smoothing with light ambient thickening.
Slow Orbit	Longer, slower movement with a spacious evolving feel.
Grain Cloud	A fuller granular cloud with more obvious layering.
Tape Bloom	A darker, warmer granular wash with added color.
Reverse Glass	Reverse-leaning fragments with a glassy trailing feel.
Wide Scatter	Wide stereo grain placement and more scattered motion.
Diffuse Haze	Heavier diffusion for a soft, hazy atmosphere.
Pulse Dust	More rhythmic, pulsed granular events.
Frosted Motion	Pronounced motion with a frosted, shifting texture.
Deep Space	Large ambient tail with more distant, cinematic bloom.
Fractured Air	More fragmented and expressive sound-design territory.
Event Horizon	The most extreme preset, designed for heavy transformation and dramatic texture.

***Preset behavior:** Factory presets preserve the current Output setting and the current Power state. Loading a user preset also preserves Output and Power so sound changes do not unexpectedly jump your session level or bypass state.*

8. Practical Workflows

Goal	Starting approach
Subtle widening / enhancement	Keep Transform moderate, use low Density, modest Spread, little or no Reverse, and a small amount of Motion or Diffuse. Blend with Mix below 100%.
Ambient pad from a short phrase	Raise Capture, enable Freeze after a good moment, use longer Grain Size, higher Smooth, more Diffuse, and moderate Space/Size.
Rhythmic pulse effect	Use a synced Rate Sync setting such as 1/16 or 1/32, shorter Grain Size, lower Smooth, and moderate Transform for more obvious pulses.
Reverse textures	Raise Reverse, use longer Capture and moderate Position/Jitter, then add Diffuse and Space to smooth the reversed fragments together.
Wide vocal doubles / atmosphere	Try moderate Grain Size, low-to-medium Density, some Spread and Width above 100%, then blend with Mix to taste.
Aggressive sound design	Push Transform, Density, Reverse, Jitter, Drift, Diffuse, and Color. Feedback can help the effect evolve into a more unstable and dramatic texture.

9. Presets, Undo/Redo, and Resizing

- Aethon includes factory presets and supports saving, loading, renaming, and deleting user presets.
- Parameter edits and preset actions participate in Aethon's undo/redo system.
- The window is resizable and its size is stored with the plugin state.
- The current preset state can be marked modified when controls change after loading a preset.

10. Troubleshooting

Symptom	What to try
I do not hear much effect.	Raise Transform, raise Mix, and make sure the buffer has had time to capture audio. If Freeze is on immediately after inserting the plugin, Aethon may be replaying an empty or nearly empty buffer.
The sound is too chaotic.	Lower Jitter, Reverse, Density, Drift, and Feedback. Increase Smooth for softer grain edges.
The effect is too dark or too bright.	Adjust LPF and HPF, and use Color carefully. Lower LPF darkens the effect; higher HPF removes low-frequency buildup.
The stereo image feels too wide or too narrow.	Adjust Width and Spread separately. Spread changes grain placement; Width changes the final processed stereo width.
I want the same captured texture to keep playing.	Use Freeze to stop recording new audio into the history buffer.
The effect still reacts to old audio.	Use Clear to wipe the capture buffer and start fresh.
My grains are not in tempo.	Set Rate Sync to a note value and verify that the host BPM is correct.
Feedback is becoming intense.	Reduce Feedback or clear/freeze the buffer. High settings can build dense recirculating textures by design.

11. Technical Reference

Item	Specification
Transform	0 to 100%
Grain Size	8 to 800 ms
Grain Rate	0.5 to 60 Hz
Density	1 to 6
Position	0 to 100%
Jitter	0 to 100%
Drift	0 to 100%
Reverse	0 to 100% probability

Item	Specification
Spread	0 to 100%
Width	0 to 200%
Feedback	0 to 85%
Smooth	0 to 100%
Capture Length	1.0 to 8.0 seconds
Rate Sync	Free / 1/4 / 1/8 / 1/16 / 1/32
HPF	20 Hz to 5 kHz
LPF	400 Hz to 20 kHz
Motion	0 to 100%
Diffuse	0 to 100%
Space	0 to 100%
Size	0 to 100%
Color	0 to 100%
Mix	0 to 100%
Output	-18 to +12 dB
Main channel layouts	Mono or stereo
Plugin formats	Windows VST3; macOS VST3 and AU

12. Product Information and Support

For current downloads, product information, and updates:

<https://parishaudio.com/products/aethon>

Parish Audio support: <https://parishaudio.com/contact>